Amendments to the Claims

      1.   (Currently Amended)   A computer-implemented method of
2   facilitating a value exchange between multiple users in a distributed value exchange
system, the method comprising:

4   (a)   registering a first user with the value exchange system, wherein the first
user is assigned a first account with the value exchange system;

6   (b)   receiving at the value exchange system a value exchange transaction from
the first user, wherein said transaction involves a second user and includes:

8   (i)   a pre-existing identifier of the second user, wherein the pre-
existing identifier enables communication with the second user independent of the
10   value exchange system; and

    (ii)   a value to be exchanged between the first user and the second user;
12   wherein the first user sends the value exchange transaction to the value
exchange system without informing the second user of the value exchange
14   transaction; and

    (c)   at the value exchange system:
16   (i)   computer-generating a notification of said value exchange
transaction;
18   (ii)   electronically sending said notification to the second user; and

    (iii)   prior to said electronically sending, <u>debiting said value from one of</u>
20   ~~allocating said value between~~ said first account and a second account associated
with the second user<u>, and crediting said value to the other of said first account and</u>
22   <u>said second account</u>.

      2.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2   registering the second user with the value exchange system if not already
registered.

      3.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said value to be exchanged
2   between the first user and the second user is to be transferred from the first user to the

second user.

4.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said value to be exchanged

2   between the first user and the second user is to be transferred from the second user to the

first user.

5.   (Cancelled)

6.   (Cancelled)

7.   (Cancelled)

8.   (Cancelled)

9.   (Cancelled)

10.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said pre-existing identifier

2   is a telephone number.

11.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said pre-existing identifier

2   is an electronic mail address.

12.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said receiving a value

2   exchange transaction comprises:

      initiating a value exchange involving a second user on a mobile client device of

4   said first user;

      establishing a connection between the first user and the value exchange system;

6   and

      transmitting said value exchange to the system.

13.   (Original)   The method of claim 12, wherein said initiating a value

2   exchange transaction comprises establishing a communication link between the first
user's mobile computing device and a second user's mobile client device.

14.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said value exchange

2   transaction is received from the first user through a mobile communication device.

15.   (Original)   The method of claim 14, wherein the mobile

2   communication device is a personal digital assistant.

16.   (Original)   The method of claim 14, wherein the mobile

2   communication device is a telephone.

17.   (Original)   The method of claim 14, wherein the mobile

2   communication device is a two-way pager.

18.   (Original)   The method of claim 14, wherein said value exchange

2   transaction is received from the mobile communication device through a wireless
network.

19.   (Original)   The method of claim 14, wherein the mobile

2   communication device is a disconnectable device.

20.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, further comprising converting said

2   value to be exchanged between the first user and the second user from a first form to a
second form.

21.   (Original)   The method of claim 20, wherein said first form is a first

2   currency and said second form is a second currency.

22.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 1, wherein a form of

2   said value to be exchanged between the first user and the second user depends on the pre-

existing identifier.

23.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, further comprising holding said
2 value to be exchanged between the first user and the second user in escrow with an
escrow party until said value exchange transaction is completed.

24.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 1, further comprising
2 repeating (b) and (c) for a second value exchange transaction between the second user
and a third user.

25.   (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein an asymmetric
2 cryptographic scheme is applied to secure said value exchange transaction.

26.   (Currently Amended)   A computer-implemented method of
2 facilitating an exchange of value between multiple users through a distributed transaction
system separate from the multiple users, the method comprising:
4   (a)   receiving an instruction from a first user to exchange a value with a
second user, wherein the first user is a registered user of the distributed transaction
6 system and the instruction includes:
         (i)   an identifier of a second user not registered with the distributed
8   transaction system, wherein said identifier is usable to identify the second user
independently of the distributed transaction system; and
10   (ii)   the value to be exchanged between the first user and the second
         user;
12   (b)   notifying the second user of said value exchange in an electronic
communication from the distributed transaction system;
14   (c)   registering the second user with the distributed transaction system at a
computer, wherein the distributed transaction system comprises the computer; ~~and~~
16   (d)   <u>debiting said value from an account of one of the first user and the second
user</u> ~~transferring said value between the first user and the second user within the~~
18 ~~distributed transaction system~~; <u>and</u>

<u>(e)</u>   <u>crediting said value to an account of the other of the first user and the</u>

20   <u>second user;</u>

wherein no term of said value exchange is negotiable by the second user after said

22   receiving and before said <u>debiting and said crediting</u> ~~transferring~~.

27.   (Original)   The method of claim 26, wherein said identifier is an

2   electronic mail address.

28.   (Original)   The method of claim 26, wherein said identifier is a

2   telephone number.

29.   (Original)   The method of claim 26, wherein said instruction is

2   received through a mobile communication device operated by the first user.

30.   (Currently Amended)   A computer-implemented method of

2   facilitating a financial transaction between a first user and a second user through a
distributed financial services system, the method comprising:

4   (a)   registering a first user with the distributed financial services system;

(b)   receiving at the distributed financial services system a financial exchange

6   request from a mobile communication device operated by the first user, wherein said
financial transaction request includes:

8   (i)   a pre-existing identifier of a second user participating in said
financial exchange, wherein said pre-existing identifier is configured to identify

10   the second user for a purpose other than conducting a financial exchange with the
financial services system; and

12   (ii)   an amount of the financial exchange, wherein said amount is non-
negotiable by the second user;

14   (c)   computer-generating and sending a notification of said financial exchange
request from the distributed financial service system to the second user; and

16   (d)   within the distributed financial service system, allocating said amount of
said financial exchange between the first user and the second user <u>by:</u>

18   debiting said amount from an account of either the first user or the second

user; and

20   crediting said amount to an account of the other of the first user and the

second user.

31.   (Original)   The method of claim 30, wherein said pre-existing

2   identifier is an electronic mail address.

32.   (Original)   The method of claim 30, wherein said pre-existing

2   identifier is a telephone number.

33.   (Original)   The method of claim 30, further comprising:

2   (c')   registering the second user with the distributed financial services system

before allocating said amount of said financial exchange.

34.   (Currently Amended)   A value exchange system for exchanging

2   value between multiple users, comprising:

a database configured to store information concerning registered users of the

4   value exchange system and details of transactions conducted by the registered users;

a synchronization server configured to receive a first value exchange transaction

6   from a client device operated by a first party, wherein said first value exchange

transaction involves a second party identified by the first party with an electronic mail

8   address, but terms of said first value exchange transaction are not negotiable by the

second party; and

10   a first value exchange account associated with the first party;

a second value exchange account associated with the second party; and

12   a communication server configured to:

notify the second party of said first value exchange transaction using said

14   electronic mail address; and

receive a connection from the second party and register the second party if

16   not already registered;

wherein an exchange of value between the first party and the second party

18 involves:

debiting one of the first value exchange account and the second value

20 exchange account; and

crediting the other of the first value exchange account and the second

22 value exchange account.

35. (Original) The system of claim 34, further comprising a financial

2 server configured to interact with a financial institution to access value to facilitate said

first value exchange transaction.

36. (Original) The system of claim 34, further comprising a security

2 server configured to generate a digital identity certificate that may be used to authenticate

the first party.

37. (Original) The system of claim 36, wherein said security server is

2 further configured to authenticate a digital transaction certificate that may be used to

authenticate said value exchange transaction.

38. (Cancelled)

39. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium

2 storing instructions that, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a

method of facilitating a value exchange between multiple users in a distributed value

4 exchange system, the method comprising:

(a) registering a first user with the value exchange system, wherein the first

6 user is assigned a first account with the value exchange system;

(b) receiving at the value exchange system a value exchange transaction from

8 the first user, wherein said transaction involves a second user and includes:

(i) a pre-existing identifier of the second user, wherein the pre-

10 existing identifier enables communication with the second user independent of the

value exchange system; and

12   (ii)   a value to be exchanged between the first user and the second user;

wherein the first user sends the value exchange transaction to the value

14   exchange system without informing the second user of the value exchange

transaction; and

16   (c)   at the value exchange system:

(i)   computer-generating a notification of said value exchange

18   transaction;

(ii)   electronically sending said notification to the second user; and

20   (iii)   prior to said electronically sending, <u>debiting said value from one of</u>

~~allocating said value between~~ said first account and a second account associated

22   with the second user<u>, and crediting said value to the other of said first account and</u>

<u>said second account</u>.

40.   (Currently Amended)   A computer readable storage medium

2   storing instructions that, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a

method of facilitating an exchange of value between multiple users through a distributed

4   transaction system, the method comprising:

(a)   receiving an instruction from a first user to exchange a value with a

6   second user, wherein the first user is a registered user of the distributed transaction

system and the instruction includes:

8   (i)   an identifier of a second user not registered with the distributed

transaction system, wherein said identifier is usable to identify the second user

10   independently of the distributed transaction system; and

(ii)   the value to be exchanged between the first user and the second

12   user;

(b)   notifying the second user of said value exchange in an electronic

14   communication from the distributed transaction system;

(c)   registering the second user with the distributed transaction system at a

16   computer, wherein the distributed transaction system comprises the computer; ~~and~~

(d)   debiting said value from an account of one of the first user and the second

18   user ~~transferring said value between the first user and the second user within the~~

~~distributed transaction system~~; and

20   (e)   crediting said value to an account of the other of the first user and the

second user;

22   wherein no term of said value exchange is negotiable by the second user after said

receiving and before said debiting and said crediting ~~transferring~~.

41.   (Currently Amended)   A computer readable storage medium

2   storing instructions that, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a

method of facilitating a financial transaction between a first user and a second user

4   through a distributed financial services system, the method comprising:

(a)   registering a first user with the distributed financial services system;

6   (b)   receiving at the distributed financial services system a financial exchange

request from a mobile communication device operated by the first user, wherein said

8   financial transaction request includes:

(i)   a pre-existing identifier of a second user participating in said

10   financial exchange, wherein said pre-existing identifier is configured to identify

the second user for a purpose other than conducting a financial exchange with the

12   financial services system; and

(ii)   an amount of the financial exchange, wherein said amount is non-

14   negotiable by the second user;

(c)   computer-generating and sending a notification of said financial exchange

16   request from the distributed financial service system to the second user; and

(d)   within the distributed financial service system, allocating said amount of

18   said financial exchange between the first user and the second user by:

(i)   debiting said amount from an account of either the first user or the

20   second user; and

(ii)   crediting said amount to an account of the other of the first user

22   and the second user.

42.   (Currently Amended)   A system for facilitating the transfer of
2   value from one user to another user, comprising:

means for receiving a value transfer request from a value provider, wherein said
4   value transfer request comprises:

an electronic mail address of a value receiver; and
6   a first value to be transferred from the value provider to the value receiver;

means for debiting ~~transferring~~ said first value from a first account associated
8   with the value provider <u>and crediting</u> ~~to~~ a second account associated with the value
receiver; and
10   means for notifying the value receiver of said value transfer only after said first
value is <u>debited</u> ~~transferred~~ from the first account <u>and credited</u> to the second account;
12   wherein the value receiver is identifiable, for purposes of said value transfer, only
by said electronic mail address.

43.   (Currently Amended)   A computer-implemented method of
2   transferring value, comprising:

receiving a connection from a registered user of a value transfer system<u>, wherein
4   the registered user has a first account with the value transfer system and the first account
is identified by a first electronic mail address of the registered user</u>;
6   receiving from the registered user a request to execute a transfer <u>of value</u> to
<u>another</u> ~~an unregistered~~ party, wherein the <u>other</u> ~~unregistered~~ party is identified only by
8   ~~an~~ <u>a second</u> electronic mail address, the request comprising:

said <u>second</u> electronic mail address ~~of the unregistered party~~; and
10   a first value to be transferred to the <u>other</u> ~~unregistered~~ party;
<u>creating for the other party a second account with the value transfer system, if the
12   second account does not already exist, wherein the second account is identified by said
second electronic mail address;</u>
14   at the value transfer system, transferring said first value from the registered user
to the <u>other</u> ~~unregistered~~ party <u>by debiting the first account by said first value and
16   crediting the second account by said first value</u>; <u>and</u>
only after said first value is transferred, sending notification of said transfer from

18   said value transfer system to the <u>other</u> <s>unregistered</s> party via electronic mail; <s>and</s>

~~registering the unregistered party, wherein said registering comprises creating an~~

20   ~~account for the unregistered party;~~

wherein the unregistered party is not informed of said transfer by the registered

22   user.

44.   (Currently Amended)   A computer-implemented method of

2   transferring value, comprising:

receiving a connection from a first user of a value transfer system;

4   receiving from the first user a request to execute a value transfer to a second user,

the request comprising:

6   an electronic mail address of the second user; and

a first value to be transferred to the second user; <s>and</s>

8   <u>debiting said first value from an account of the first user;</u>

<u>crediting said first value to an account of the second user; and</u>

10   only after said <u>debiting and said crediting</u> <s>first value is transferred to the second</s>

<s>user</s>, sending a notification of said value transfer from said value transfer system to the

12   second user via electronic mail;

wherein said electronic mail address is sufficient for said value transfer system to

14   transfer said first value from an account of the first user to an account associated with the

second user; and

16   wherein the second user is not informed of said value transfer until the second

user receives said notification.

45.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 1, wherein said

2   registering the first user comprises creating said first account.

46.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 45, wherein said

2   receiving comprises said registering.

47.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, <u>further comprising</u>

2 ~~wherein said allocating comprises~~:

    creating said second account; and

4   registering the second user.

    48.   (New)   A distributed value exchange system for facilitating a value

2 exchange between multiple users, the value exchange system comprising:

    (a)   registration means for registering a first user with the value exchange

4 system, wherein the first user is assigned a first account with the value exchange system;

    (b)   receiving means for receiving at the value exchange system a value

6 exchange transaction from the first user, wherein said transaction involves a second user

and includes:

8   (i)   a pre-existing identifier of the second user, wherein the pre-

    existing identifier enables communication with the second user independent of the

10   value exchange system; and

    (ii)   a value to be exchanged between the first user and the second user;

12   wherein the first user sends the value exchange transaction to the value

    exchange system without informing the second user of the value exchange

14   transaction; and

    (c)   notification means for:

16   (i)   computer-generating a notification of said value exchange

    transaction; and

18   (ii)   electronically sending said notification to the second user; and

    (d)   value exchange means for:

20   (i)   debiting said value from one of said first account and a second

    account associated with the second user; and

22   (ii)   crediting said value to the other said first account and said second

    account.